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Manolo Blahnik steps up in-store presence in Asia

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Image courtesy of Manolo Blahnik

By STAFF REPORTS

Footwear label Manolo Blahnik is expanding operations in select Asian markets through a new distribution and retail partnership.

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Beginning with the autumn/winter 2016 collection, Bluebell Group will be responsible for Manolo Blahnik's distribution and retail development in Japan, Singapore and Malaysia. Depending on the success of the partnership, Bluebell Group will then be tasked with expanding Manolo Blahnik further into the region.

Finding its footing

Under the agreement, Bluebell Group will manage and provide support service for Manolo Blahnik's 41 retail locations already in operation in the Japanese market.

The Japanese locations will be added to Manolo Blahnik's existing 290 points of sale in 33 countries. Manolo Blahnik's retail network consists of 11 standalone stores, including two in Hong Kong and one in Seoul, South Korea.

In Japan particularly, Bluebell Group will help Manolo Blahnik to launch its first shop-in-shop and corners in the market's leading department stores. Additionally, the brand is planning its first flagship in Tokyo for 2017.

Also, Manolo Blahnik's shop-in-shop in Takashimaya in Singapore will be operated by Bluebell's local division. The shop-in-shop will undergo renovations later this year.



Manolo Blahnik illustration for spring/summer 2016

In the Malaysian market, Manolo Blahnik will open its first standalone storefront in autumn/winter 2016. The boutique will be located in the Pavilion Mall in the speciality retail section.

"We are delighted to now be working with the Bluebell Group in Asia," said Kristina Blahnik, CEO of Manolo Blahnik International, in a statement. "Manolo Blahnik is a global brand but with comparatively small distribution in Japan, Malaysia and Singapore.

"With Bluebell now as our partners we are excited about exploring and building the business in these regions and further territories," she said. "I have trust in their guidance and experience, and appreciate their company family values that resonate with our own. We look forward to a successful relationship."

Manolo Blahnik has recently turned to ecommerce platform Farfetch to expand its global presence. As of March, the online retailer's Black & White service powers Manolo Blahnik's monobrand ecommerce point of sale.



Manolo Blahnik ecommerce Web site, powered by Farfetch's Black & White

Through Black & White, Manolo Blahnik sells its entire catalog of men's and women's shoes as well as books relevant to the brand ([see story](#)).